

7. FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE LIMBLESS
LIZARD, *OPHISAURUS GRACILIS* (GRAY) FROM
SHILLONG, ASSAM

Scarcely any data exists on the biology of the limbless lizard *Ophisaurus gracilis* (Gray), possibly because of lack of opportunities for study in its natural environment. I have earlier noted in this *Journal* (65:233) some preliminary observations on this unique lizard from Shillong. This is a continuation of the observations in the field, and in the laboratory.

It appears that this lizard, has a period of hibernation as could be deduced from the fact that while several individuals were collected from May to October, in the same collecting localities, notwithstanding much painstaking search, no specimens were seen after October until next May.

Specimens in captivity in the laboratory were indifferent to small insects and spiders but earthworms (*Entyphaeus manipurensis* Steph.) were taken avidly. They fed only at night. They avoided daylight on the cage-floor and remained in hiding until it was dark.

A gravid female was collected on 23 June, 1968, and kept under careful observation. A month later on the morning of 22 July, 1968, she presented a clutch of four eggs (which she must have laid during the previous night), and added a fifth egg on the night of 23 July, 1968. The eggs were ellipsoidal, white, measuring 18.00 to 21.00 mm. in length, 10.00 to 11.00 mm. in width and weighing from 1.00 to 1.50 gm. June, July appear to be the breeding months of the limbless lizard in Shillong.

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